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IN PHOTOS



Rhythmic gymnasts wowed the crowd and judges with their spectacular routines.

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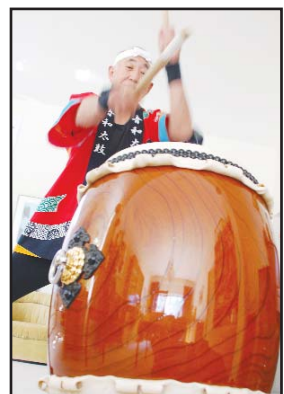
COMMUNITY



Meet future stars on ice - directly from Glen Cairn Skating Club!

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FEATURE



Feel the beat of the drums as a Japanese group celebrates a milestone.

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Julia Belittchenko twirls a ribbon during her performance at rhythmic gymnastics' first qualifying meet for the Ontario championships last Saturday. The event took place at Holy Trinity Catholic High School and featured routines by local gymnasts.

EMC photo by JESSICA DEEKS

Couple overcomes recession to start pet food business

By SABINE GIBBINS

Staff Writer

EMC Business - Karla Briones and her husband Shawn Hoey cast their eyes over the current chaos of their new life.

Scattered about are pieces of lumber, ladders, stray wires hanging from the ceiling, and the scent of renovation.

The young couple (and new parents to daughter Nayeli, almost one) could never have predicted the challenges they have faced over the past couple of months while starting up their organic pet food business in Kanata.

A plunging economy is reason enough for citizens to save their money and find stable job opportunities.

But for Karla and Shawn, novice entrepreneurs, it's not only the recession, but their love for animals, that has given them added ammunition to

make their business, Global Pet Foods, a success.

It was in 2007 when Karla, who had a successful career working for a public relations agency in Toronto at the time, decided to quit her job.

"I wanted to be the client," she says.

Karla, who has a passion for pets like her husband, says they made the decision based on this. As much as she enjoyed her job in public relations and dealt with a variety of clients, she wanted to focus on one client that was near and dear to her, and Shawn's, heart: the pet owner. Karla, whose father is an Ottawa veterinarian, comes by her love for animals honestly.

And so, she and her husband gave up their life in Toronto, their home and their careers and began searching for pet food franchises.

"At first he thought I was crazy," she recalls with

a laugh.

Karla and Shawn enjoy spending quality time with their pooch Pepe, a four-year-old giant schnauzer. In Toronto, they took Pepe to "dog socials", where they mingled with other dog owners, and took Pepe for walks in the neighbourhood dog park. They'd like to see the dog community here in Kanata unite just like they experienced in Toronto.

Their life was set in Toronto. They both were involved in successful careers and had a house that was making them money.

"Toronto was good to us," says Shawn, who adds the couple even tested the real estate market while there.

Before Nayeli came along, Pepe, says Karla, was their baby.

They've been feeding Pepe natural dog food since

•See PET STORE pg. KA1

Captioned movies now available at AMC theatres

By SABINE GIBBINS

Staff Writer

EMC News - Scott Simser reads the orange font pop up on the plexiglas in front of him and laughs.

The hearing impaired lawyer (who sought the Liberal nomination for Carleton-Mississippi Mills in 2002) is enjoying a movie at the AMC Theatres in Kanata; a pastime he and others can now enjoy in their hometown.

Simser recently won a human rights settlement between him (and other hearing impaired individuals) and AMC Theatres to include closed captioning in the Kanata movie theatre.

The Katimavik resident initiated his complaint to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal in 2000, and up until the settlement in 2007, the strong lobbying was seven years long.

"I am very excited to finally be able to see movies in my own hometown," he says. "Now I can take any of my three sons, ages 10, 6, and 2, to the movies, and my wife, too."

"What is important is that deaf and hard of hearing, to a much better extent, can share in the magic of the movies, fully being able to understand what is happening without having to pester any of our hearing friends or family as to what is happening on the screen."

Simser banded together with two other hard of hearing individuals, Gary Malkowski, and Nancy Barker, to commence a human rights complaint against Famous Players, Cineplex Galaxy, AMC Entertainment Inc., Alliance Atlantis Cinemas, and Rainbow Centre Cinemas Inc., Universal Studios Canada Inc. and Paramount

Pictures Canada Distribution Inc.

In America, individuals with hearing impairments have been lobbying for movie theatre captioning rights since the first movie to be captioned using this technology — Titanic — first surfaced in 1997.

"The process was lengthy because of the complexity of the proceedings (four movie exhibitors, such as Cineplex and AMC, and two movie distributors, such as Paramount Pictures and Universal Studios)," Simser explains.

According to the Caption Movies Now Coalition, the total number of theatres in Ontario in which rear-window captioning (RWC) is available sits at 18.

RWC is a method being used currently at theatres across Ottawa, including the AMC Theatres in Kanata, for displaying the captions of a movie on a screen for deaf or hard of hearing individuals.

On the way into the show, viewers pick up a reflective plastic panel mounted on a flexible stalk at the Guest Services desk. The panel's stalk fits into the viewer's cupholder. A large LED display is mounted in the back of the theatre which presents the captions for the movie in mirror image.

Viewers are able to move the panels into proper position (usually below the movie screen) so they can read the reflected captions and watch the movie at the same time.

It is best to sit near the centre of the theatre to receive the best angle, says Simser, who has enjoyed watching movies at various theatres across the city.

It does not disrupt the viewing of other audience members who hardly notice the panel or the captions.

RWC is an alternative

•See MOVIES pg. KA8



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